GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:287
ANSWERED ON:11.03.2003
RESEARCH ON GENES
SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV (PATIL)

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite spending crores of rupees nothing much could be achieved in the field of Gene Research as reported in Rashtriya Sahara dated January 6, 2003;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the total amount spent thereon during the last two years;

(c) the number of research papers presented by the Indian Scientists in the general session of the recently concluded Science Congress;

(d) whether the Government propose any perspective action plan in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

Answer

MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (PROF. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI)

(a) to (e) : A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 287 BY SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JA
REGARDING `RESEARCH ON GENES` TO BE ANSERED ON 11/03/2003

(a) & (b) : Biotechnology has been accorded high priority in the country taking note of the enormous potential of the field, since 1982. Gene research is an integral part of biotechnology covering human, animal, plant and microbes. There are many achievements through the investments made in this field. The Ministry of Science and Technology, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) and the Indian Council fo Agriculture Research (ICAR) have been supporting research in this field with an investment of about Rs.300-400 crore, per year. In two years, about Rs.400 crores have been invested. Although, the field has long gestation period, yet there are many significant leads and achievements since 1982. Leprosy vaccine, infectious bovine, rhinotrachitis (IBR) vaccine and many diagnostics kits namely western immunoblot and naked eye agglutination of erythrocytes assays for HIV-I and II , ELISA for Hepatitis-C and alpha faeto protein estimations are already in the market, including soft options of biotechnology, namely, biofertilisers, biopesticides, tissue culture plants, herbal products etc. Just with the support of the Department of Biotechnology, 36 technologies have been transferred to the industry.

(c) : At least 24 research papers in cutting edge frontiers of gene research and biotechnology were presented by Indian experts in the Plenary Session and Sectoral Symposia of the recently held Indian Science Congress at Bangalore. Also, several young scientists highlighted their research on genes and genomics through scientific posters. There was much appreciation for the high quality research done by the Indian scientists in this field.

(d) & (e) : A Vision Document outlining a 10 year perspective plan with the involvement of a large number of national and international experts was prepared in September 2001. Based on this, the Department of Biotechnology has prepared the 10th Five Year Plan. The Annual Plan proposals are based on these and implemented accordingly.